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the honor due to age and services ; and this, even when we are conscious that the cause is to be found in himself. Our pity for Burr is, perhaps, more than he himself would have thought to be called for. The solitary oak which stands for years, after the lightning has furrowed its stem and scathed its summit, turning it to decay, is not a more fitting emblem of desolation, than the moral vegetation of such a human being.

We have but a single word to add ; and this relates to his critical and literary judgment. With a mind possessing acute powers of reasoning, without any definite moral basis, it cannot be wondered at, that he should often be struck with the new rather than the true. Jeremy Bentham and Mary Wolstoncraft seem to have been the great authorities in politics and morals to which he bowed. Whether he borrowed from the former his definition of law, which we have already quoted, we do not know, or whether it was original with himself ; but, in either case, the scale of his moral development may be equally well understood. His letters to his daughter communicate little beyond the detail of his love affairs, and allusions to local and temporary matters. They are clearly written and vigorously expressed ; for Burr through life thought clearly, however fond of mystery in his actions. But they do not exalt him in our estimation. To sum up all, we think, after regarding him in every light, whether as an officer, a lawyer, a politician, or a citizen, we cannot agree with Mr. Davis in calling him a great man, and shall never think him to have been a good one. Nor can we wonder, that the pure and patriotic mind of Washington should have shrunk from contact with one so decidedly its opposite, or that he should have exercised his influence, in its whole extent, to prevent its evil influence upon our public affairs.

ART. VII. — *The Life and Character of the Reverend Samuel H. Stearns*. Second Edition. Boston : J. A. Stearns. 1839. pp. 252.

A BRIEF notice was taken of the “ Life and Select Discourses ” of Mr. Stearns in our number for July, 1838. The second edition of the work is wholly in the form of

a Memoir, the Discourses being omitted, with a view, as we are informed in the Preface, to the publication, hereafter, of a larger collection of Discourses by themselves. We would repeat our recommendation of this book as a pleasant biography of an interesting man. We have thought, in reading it, of the importance of self-cultivation in the Christian ministry. We shall aim at nothing more in our present remarks, than a few obvious suggestions upon this point.

A minister's thoughts and concern are officially and necessarily for others. He has his congregation before his mind in his solitary study. He judges of the fitness of a consolation or reproof by the condition and feelings of some of his flock ; he determines even what to think upon, or what to write, by his knowledge of the moral state of others. In the pulpit, he thinks, he feels, he speaks, for others ; he tries to help the devotions of others in his prayers. He recollects what he has said in public with reference to its probable effect on others, and goes amongst his flock to repeat his instructions and exhortations. If a minister's heart were impressible like wax, and each character he comes in contact with, could stamp it, it would sometimes look like one of Quarles's Emblems ; and, again, it would be like a registry on a mountain, where the various travellers have inscribed their joyful, or querulous, or pathetic, or sublime, or ludicrous impressions. Every week he has to be imprinted afresh. New cases of interest continually occur to make a deeper impression than the former. He must go through the houses of his people, if from no better motive, to forestall the half affectionate and half murmuring complaint at his long absence. Though

“ Wide is his parish, and houses fer asonder,
Yet he must leave nought for no rain ne thonder.”

It is evident, that no man can give himself up to such cares and influences without losing all originality and freshness of character and feeling, unless, by a determined and systematic effort, he makes the cultivation of his own mind a prominent object of his life. He cannot for a long time profit others without it. But this is not the motive which we would at present urge. He owes it to himself ; he must not neglect himself in caring for others ; he is of as much importance as any other individual, considered as an intelligent being ; his

own character and influence cannot be formed or sustained without watchfulness against the effect of almost incessant and desultory effort.

He, however, who should withdraw from the world and give himself to solitary study, would soon be unfit for the Christian ministry, and lose perhaps the best of his opportunities for moral improvement. A minister must live and move amongst his people, if he would be successful even as a preacher. Subjects suggested by the experience of a parishioner, and coming, crystallized and sparkling with accretions gained by passing through the well-stored mind of the preacher, will be likely to affect many minds.

All discourses, however, are not, they cannot be, drawn from incidents in a parish. There are themes which are not of the will of man. But even these depend, for their effect upon a congregation, on that power of presenting truth which is learned only by knowing the channels in which the thoughts of men are apt to flow, and on that ability to make a subject practical which is gained by acquaintance with the wants and errors of the human mind.

To this we may add the necessity of constant improvement, from the advancement of the community in general knowledge. Popular lectures make men familiar not only with the various subjects of literature and science, but with the best forms of thought and expression. They bring their instructed minds to the ministrations of the sanctuary ; and, while the preacher has the advantage over all who address them, in his opportunities of reaching their minds and hearts, he must not, in reliance on this superiority, fail to make his "profiting appear to all." He should seek for the best gifts in thinking and writing and speaking, that his instructions may not be held in disadvantageous comparison with those of literary teachers. If, instead of suggesting new trains of thought, or presenting sacred truth in varied and interesting lights, he occupies his discourses chiefly with exhortations, or moralizes effeminately, or abounds excessively in that tropical luxuriance to which an imaginative mind is prone, he will excite the disrespect, if not the contempt, of his hearers. On the principle of self-defence, as a means of continuing in his place, to say nothing of his usefulness, it is essential that the minister take heed to these things. But we now recur to

our original motive for self-cultivation, from which we have thus digressed to magnify its importance.

As the camomile gives out its fragrance and multiplies itself by being trodden underfoot, so the minister, who sacredly attends to the improvement of his own mind, is helped in his intellectual efforts by those incessant and urgent demands upon him, which oppress and overcome one who does not study. The studious minister is a student everywhere ; the secretive powers of his mind are always at work ; he is getting intellectual and moral nourishment from men and things, from cursory reading, from passing events and scenes. When called to public intellectual effort, if his health and spirits are in a proper tone, he will have an alacrity of thought and feeling from the influence of active duties upon his cultivated mind. In his private ministerial labors, the consciousness of doing his duty to himself as an intellectual being will give him the same alacrity, and a sustaining energy in his business, and amongst men. He verifies Cicero's eulogium upon letters ; "*Delectant domi, non impediunt foris ; — nobiscum peregrinantur.*" There is an electricity about the mind of such a man, which accumulates thoughts and illustrations wherever he may be. His mind is fertilized, and the seeds of things, which drop into it from books or observation, yield, some thirty, some sixty, and some a hundred fold. The habit of original study gives a man an invigoration, a muscularity of mind, which impresses others with a sense of his strength. He makes a path of his own through every subject.

So long as the studies which a clergyman pursues are not unprofitable (and it is hard to say of almost any thing, as a subject of investigation, that it is useless), and provided he does not become absorbed in it, as eccentric minds are apt to be in their odd selections, we had almost said it is no matter what a man chooses by which to exercise the investigating powers of his mind. A knowledge of the things which lie immediately within the scope of his profession, and those concentric studies which belong to his calling, every one who would write sermons is obliged in some manner to regard. But there is something to be done for the mind, beyond its ordinary occupation with mere professional studies. These will soon fatigue and disgust, if not interchanged with studies which have no immediate relation to the profes-

sion. It is of great use to keep up a course of reading, or the study of some language, or the investigation of some science, which has not, perceptibly, even a remote connexion with one's calling. It gives a vigor to the intellectual powers upon returning to the specific duties of the profession. It imparts a self-respect amongst men ; it opens unexpected sources of illustration.

There will be one effect from a determined adherence to the principle we are considering, which many preachers, we cannot doubt, would find favorable to their increased usefulness. It would lead them to write fewer but more valuable sermons. A conscientious minister is apt to employ his time in intellectual efforts for the pulpit, which on account of their number are necessarily inferior, except that occasionally, in a moment of inspiration, he will produce a discourse which he will dare to rank among his happy efforts. When he looks over his manuscripts, his heart sometimes sinks at the sight of what he cannot regard otherwise than as useless matter ;— though, when he wrote and preached these discourses, they had to his mind the interest of novelty and of a present excitement. Few discourses will have the same interest to the writer's mind at all times ; they should not, therefore, be hastily condemned ; but we believe that the younger clergy, to say the least, generally feel, that they have a collection of manuscripts, prepared amidst the multiplicity of parochial cares, which are unfit to be repeated, or to be read by another.

We believe that this evil can be in a measure remedied, though juvenile efforts will generally appear in an unfavorable light to the mature judgment of the writer. The evil, we believe, can be remedied in part by a solemn determination to make the preparation for the pulpit the first and great labor of the ministerial life, by devoting much time to the selection and arrangement of each subject, and, by right habits of self-improvement, bringing a well-stored mind to its discussion. If a minister sustains himself and makes visible improvement in his pulpit, he is established in the confidence and respect of his people ; but, if he fails here, however laborious and affectionate and faithful he may be elsewhere, the people will soon tire of his services. Now, if, instead of preparing two sermons a week, each hastily written, the time and strength should be devoted to one, the influence of the pulpit would

be greater, the people would be more permanently edified, the preparation of discourses would become easier and more pleasant, and, what is desirable, a great number of them would bear to be repeated. Some plan in connexion with this, with respect to the other service on the Sabbath, such as preaching extempore, or a system of exchanges, will enable the young preacher to advance in his ministerial labor with pleasure and profit.

These remarks have an important bearing upon a topic of peculiar interest to parishes and the clergy at the present day. We refer to the frequent dismissal of ministers. We have no doubt, that one cause of this evil is the want of studious habits in many of the clergy, owing in part to the increased benevolent efforts of the times. If a minister considered it a principal object of his life to study, not only would the people be better satisfied with his labors, but he would think less of the inconveniences and trials of his place. He would be so absorbed in his literary and religious pursuits, that he would not feel many of the irritating things to which an indolent habit with regard to study makes him sensitive. Want of support, serious divisions in his parish, or dissatisfaction with his services, of course will follow him into his study, and end, perhaps, without his fault and against his wishes, in his dismissal. But a great cause of the removal of ministers at the present day, we have reason to believe, is a dissatisfaction with their places of labor, which might in many cases be prevented by better habits of study. A man, who is conscious of advancement in true learning, will so perceive his ability to profit others, and feel a self-sustaining energy from the natural effect of right mental exercise, as to look upon his people, in a good sense, as his dependents, rather than upon himself as subject to their caprice. Its effect upon him, as to the anticipation or fear of trouble in his parish, compared with a slothful spirit, is, that, whereas in the one case he will "flee when no man pursueth," in the other, he will be "bold as a lion." He will be superior to the petty causes of discontent which so often embitter and finally destroy the ministerial connexion. His spirit will be cheerful in the interchange of parochial duties with sedentary pursuits, provided his habits of study and of relaxation are proper. His advancement in knowledge, and in ability to explain and defend the truth, will be perceived and felt. His

topics of discourse will be so varied, that he will not abound in exhortations which proceed from no definite truth, or which, if they have a form of doctrine for their foundation, remind one of those willows which rise a little way from the earth with a poor, crooked trunk, and straightway dishevel themselves into a multitude of rods.

The habit of perpetual exhortation irritates the minds of men, and does little or no good. Its reflex influence on the preacher is pernicious. Discouragement, temptation to say sharp things, a sour spirit towards those who do not yield to his exhortations, will not unfrequently be the fatal result of such habits of preaching ; and then comes a conviction, that his usefulness is at an end in his present place, and that he has a call of Providence to leave it, perhaps like Abram, not knowing whither he goes. Many cases of this kind, we have no question, would have been prevented by suitable habits of study.

It is but of little consequence, after all, to a good and faithful minister, where he is settled, as it regards his own profit, or his influence on the world. A man may be almost buried in a hamlet amongst the mountains. The world may never hear or read his name. He faithfully uses the trust committed to him, and dies almost unknown. Such an one may not only be acknowledged hereafter as a better servant than another, whose name and fame were great amongst men, but it may also happen, that the tradition, if not the contemporaneous record, of his hidden life, is published to the world ; and then his simple faith, his unambitious spirit, his devoted love for his Master and his charge, have a greater effect upon the world, than he could have produced, if he had preached to thousands, and had spent his life in the scenes of a great city. There are places, small and inconsiderable, in our own and in other lands, which will probably be known, for many generations, by their association with the name and memory of the minister, who spent his life in their quiet and almost unknown retirements. We are deceived, if we think that our characters or usefulness depend, mainly, upon our places of labor. Young ministers, especially, need to learn, that their usefulness is not to be computed by their immediate and obvious success. Opposite the window, at which we are writing, there is a tall, young elm. Its trunk, black with the rain which is now falling, shows, in strong contrast, the

few tufted leaves which it has yet been able to produce, while, not far from it, a young fruit-tree is already full of leaves and blossoms. The latter will not long retain its present beauty, it cannot yield much fruit ; but the elm will be full and green all summer, even its shade will be better than its neighbour's fruit, and, fifty years hence, it will probably be a suitable emblem of a man of God, beneath whose quiet influence the generations of a people, their flowers and their taller grass, have fallen asleep. This is an age of sudden and violent impulse to do good, to reform mankind, to hasten the cycles of the divine decrees. Young ministers partake, to some extent, of the spirit of the times, and are unlike the nation which the Prophet said, had not, from its youth, been emptied from vessel to vessel. We are persuaded, that one great means of curing the evil is, (not to be less benevolent, not to have a jealousy and fear of all reforms, but) to recognise and practise this truth, that a prominent object of a minister's life should be self-cultivation.

We have spoken chiefly of intellectual culture. The Christian ministry affords the best possible opportunities for moral self-cultivation. In observing examples of excellent goodness, and also of the unsuspected deceitfulness of the human heart, in commending and reproving others, a minister will be reminded of his own deficiencies ; and, while he seeks to make others better, how can he, without hypocrisy, neglect to practise his own teachings ? Secluded from the world in a degree favorable to reflection, and yet continually called into the world, at least by his official intercourse with his people, he fully realizes all that is good in the idea of the monastic life, while he is preserved from its injurious abuse. He is not taken "out of the world," but is in a great measure kept "from the evil." He has advantages for learning all that is of general value in other callings, without the undesirable liabilities and necessities of those callings. His studies, for instance, may lead him into some of the paths of that profession which is concerned with the principles of law ; for a knowledge of these principles is of use in the statement and illustration of Christian truth ; but how different with him is the object and use of such knowledge, from its employment in the perplexing and wearisome contests of man with his neighbour. So with respect to the facts and

principles of almost every other calling ; the Christian minister has an advantage from them, in which, compared with those who are employed in their practical application to the arts and purposes of life, he is like the earth, which drinks in the showers which the sun, and sea, and clouds have wrought. He seems to be set apart, in every respect, by the arrangements of Providence, for the highest advantage to his moral improvement, and, at the same time, he is deprived of no privilege, nor excluded from any thing which is necessary to his consciousness of being a member, in full communion, of the great human family.

The improvement of these opportunities for moral culture will show itself in the character of his appeals from the pulpit. A man, who has done nothing but inform himself, by study, with regard to facts and theories, will address himself only to the understanding, and that with but little success. He will be, perhaps, an instructive, but certainly a hard, dry, uninteresting preacher. We remember Burke's opinion of "the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician." The subjects, with which a preacher is conversant, and the motives which are supposed to influence him, will, of course, sever his heart from the cold and inhuman influences, which gather round the soul of one, whose chief employment is to practise metaphysical alchemy upon the nature of man. But, next to him, in doing injustice to the nature which God has given us, is the man who sets forth moral and religious truth, as though we had only the power of cold and barren intellect. What a mysterious and dread power is the human conscience ! To approach it, and deal with it successfully, requires more art and care than in approaching a Pythoness ; — to secure its well-instructed aid, to prevent its encouragement of evil doing, is oftentimes a harder work than was the bringing back of Eurydice from hell. The man, who would do it successfully, must be able to say, in sympathy with Apostolic goodness, — "We trust we have a good conscience." He must know its ocean-like depths and changes, its troubled billows, its halcyon peace. He must have experienced the bitterness of sorrow at its silence with regard to his errors and sins, when it was spell-bound by evil desire ; he must have felt its power, when it afterward shouted, like a giant by reason of wine. Of the human conscience, it may be said, "Its roaring is the roaring of a lion, but its favor is as

dew upon the grass.” Surely none but he who has made himself a study, can speak of such things successfully to his fellow-men ; and we say, that there are no opportunities for such study more favorable than those which he enjoys, who has the “cure of souls,” and is thereby led, if he is a sincere and honest man, to a self-application of the errors, and the self-deceit, and the good moral examples of others.

“The Apostle Poule unto the Romaines writeth, Man shall rejoyce with hem that maketh joy, and wepen with swiche folk as wepen.”* Emotion is indispensable to the highest usefulness in preaching ; and there are no circumstances which call into exercise the various emotions of the human soul, to be compared with those which occur in the experience of a parish clergyman. The necessity of sympathizing with the joys and sorrows of his flock, gives one, who is sincerely engaged in doing good to his fellow-creatures, that moral sensibility which is essential to completeness of character. He is forbidden to be a Stoic, by the irresistible appeals which the circumstances of his people make to his heart. He cannot be diligent without having continual occasion for the exercise, and so for the cultivation, of feelings, which, to some, strangely seem unmanly, but without which man is not complete. Pride makes us strive to conceal a softness and delicacy, which nature and the providence of God conspire to produce by things and events around us. We cannot yield ourselves up to the influence of natural objects without being softened ; and the natural influence of many of the events of life is to make us tender and gentle. We need not be ashamed of this, for true genius always has a touch of the feminine. Even in those cases, in which the reign of horrid passions has made the heart desolate of every good thing, no sooner does trouble come, than we discover this same attendant of greatness ; as when the frost falls on an evergreen, the vine, which had hid itself in the changeless tree, turns red, and shows itself, in striking contrast to the unyielding green.

But there is danger, to some extent at the present day, of an undue predominance of sentiment in the character and feelings. The pulpit determines the moral sentiments of men, more than any other instrumentality, when the clergy

* Chaucer. (*Melibeus*.)

are men of proper intellectual and moral influence. The philosophy which they teach, in connexion with religion, pervades the community. They may inculcate a cold, unfeeling system of moral sentiments, and perhaps this is generally the greatest danger. But there is another and an opposite error. By appealing to the religious principle in man, which is intimately associated with the love of the mysterious, it is easy to affect meditative minds with such a passion for spiritualizing, that they will dwell continually in an ideal world. There is a luxury to some in spiritual dreams; a witchery in an imagination, to whose eye new and strange forms of beauty and of supposed truth come forth from common or heretofore unheeded things, investing characters and places with sentimental charms, and making "the sable cloud" of mystery

"Turn out its silvery lining on the night."

It is true enough, that we live in a world where sensitive minds are exposed to painful contact with vulgar people. It is also true, that it is rare to meet with those who are natural and simple in their feelings, who have instinctive and just perceptions of natural beauty, who are artless, and humble, and modest, and free from selfishness. In weariness of the world around them, in the desire for something better than the senses furnish, there is a temptation, with many, to indulge in reveries, and roam in the solitudes of a fanciful creation, and, when they return to every-day life, to feel and think about every thing with a spiritualized habit of mind. The danger from this is a prevailing effeminacy of thought and feeling, and a more exquisite state of the moral sensibilities than is consistent with the absolute duties of life.

We have no sympathy with those who allow no refined sentiments, which are incapable of demonstration by an anatomical knife, or by figures. But when a system of morals, or of natural or revealed religion, is built upon them, and, chiefly, with them, there is cause for alarm. We deplore that austere and unfeeling method of representing religious truth, as though men had no fancy or imagination. He who overlooks these powers, in addressing men, must be strangely ignorant of the history of literature, and the universal sympathy of the human mind with those productions which are characterized by imaginative genius. He must even be igno-

rant of the Bible, of the chosen method in which the Most High, to a great degree, has seen fit to instruct men. With some, every thing which is brought in as a means accessory to a bare declaration of truth, is undervalued and decried. Strange as the ancient match of Vulcan and Venus may appear to us, we could wish that it were more frequently seen, spiritualized, in many pulpits. We have sometimes heard men, in conversation, find fault, almost contemptuously, with the refinements of thought and speech in preaching, of which they manifestly needed an infusion, to correct their overgrown propensities of another kind. It is a great attainment to have such a knowledge of the human mind, as to be able to address truth to it in accordance with its various susceptibilities to impression. But, while it is unphilosophical to set forth truth in such a form that it can affect only the understanding, it is a worse error to consider the fancy or imagination as the governing power of the mind. The characteristic influence of the former method will be, not to do much good ; but of the latter, to do much hurt. For he who practises upon the latter principle, will lead men to disregard the old foundations of truth, and rely upon unsubstantial and visionary sentiments. The young are in danger of this tendency, whether they teach or learn. Many are so fascinated with the charms of beautiful and poetic thought, that they seem like one, who, having for the first time looked through a prism, is so delighted with the rich, gorgeous colors, that the common light is afterwards unsatisfying. They who indulge themselves with excessive sentiment, and those whom they instruct, should remember the words of the wise man ; “ Hast thou found honey ? Eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith and vomit it.”

The leading and commanding power of a preacher should, no doubt, be investigation and argument. But let him add to his faith, virtue ; — let moral sentiments, and feelings coming from the original depths of the soul, blend with his intellectual conceptions. He is only half a man and half a preacher, if he fails of this. His example and authority for it are the teachings of him, who spake as never man spake. Some, who are earnest in preaching against error, preach truth in such forms, and with such absence of emotion, that their truth is practical error. The studies, the meditations, the devotions, the various scenes, which are incident to the

Christian ministry, it would seem, are sufficient to make any one ardent in this calling, and to excite and cultivate those emotions, which are the beauty and excellency of an intelligent mind.

The subject of the Memoir before us furnishes an illustration and confirmation of the preceding remarks. He laid the foundations of his mind in severe and patient study. It was his custom, in his early literary pursuits, to search out the principles of what he learned, in a systematic and thorough manner. In after life, when ill health prevented a severe application to books, he realized the benefit of his early self-discipline ; for the cursory perusal of a book excited his active and well-trained thoughts, and led him to reflections, which were far different from the dreams of desultory thinkers.

“ From this period Mr. Stearns resided, most of the time, for several years, with his parents at Bedford. In the mean while, he was not idle. Retired, in a great measure, from the world, by strict attention to diet and exercise, and by occasional travelling excursions, he was able to give up his mind, with much constancy, to his favorite studies and musings. He projected a work on the Moral Nature of Man, to be comprised in three parts. The subject of the first was Conscience ; of the second, The History of Man as a Religious Being ; and of the third, the Doctrines and Economy of Revelation. The outlines of the first, after long and patient investigation, were sketched. The subjects of the other two parts were to be, it is presumed, among the principal topics of study in after life.”

Such occupations as these, by their effect in making him contented in the places where Providence called him to labor or suffer, illustrate the beneficial tendency of systematic, intellectual pursuits to promote the permanency of the pastoral relation. The valuable works, in theology, of our distinguished divines, would not, and could not, we believe, have been produced, if the modern habits of change in the ministry had prevailed in their day.

Mr. Stearns's power, in his ministerial performances, consisted very much in the moral feelings which were prominent in almost every thing that he said or did. These gave an unction to his performances, which made his public ministrations unusually acceptable and profitable. He seemed

to act fully on the principle which we have illustrated in our remarks. Self-cultivation, intellectual and moral, was a prominent object of his life. The following resolution, amongst others, was written just before he left the Theological Seminary ;

“ Why should we be for ever undoing the work of life ? Why should we wish to be just like everybody else ? I will be myself, and make the best of it. God grant that I may grow better.”

In this resolution is undoubtedly contained the secret of all true greatness in mind and character. It is the only principle upon which self-cultivation will result in original, independent power. All the great works in nature, and all those individuals of a family amongst her products which attract our notice, illustrate this principle. But the reason why so many educated minds have so little individuality, no doubt is, an extreme haste to enter upon professional life. Youth and inexperience catch at the nearest examples and helps. In after life, it is difficult to begin the work of original self-cultivation. There is need, that teachers should, to a greater extent, be teachers of the individual, rather than of classes ; and that the pupil, who is past the season of youth, should have a sense of his separateness of character from other minds. We are glad to see, of late, instances in which provision has been made to instruct those who wish to delay their entrance upon the ministry. The result of it, we trust, will be more minds who will shine by their own light.

There seldom has been a deceased friend, of whom we felt more restrained in speaking descriptively and critically, than of Mr. Stearns. There was such individuality of character about him, such a distinctness of feature in his mind, that we retain, to an unusual degree, an impression of his presence with us. What a strange liberty the grave yields us concerning its inmate ! Had a departed friend merely gone across the ocean, though entirely separated from the knowledge of him, we should not think of publishing his life and character. But while we believe him to be, though dead, as fully conscious and active as ever, and perhaps nearer to us than though an ocean were between us, we generally speak as freely of him as though he had ceased to exist. If we felt inclined to do this, on the present occasion, it would be unnecessary, on account of the excellent Memoir, to which

we have again called the attention of our readers. It is rendered still more valuable, by the addition of a letter from the Rev. Robert Baird of Paris, who saw much of Mr. Stearns while abroad, and particularly within a short time before his death.

We dismiss our notice of the Memoir with strong impressions of the subject of it, as now engaged in pursuing that exalted standard of excellence which he formed on earth. We feel that, with all his generous love for others and admiration of their greatness, he still retains, in a peculiar degree, an individuality of character and of enjoyment, which makes him "a particular star" in the firmament of heaven.

ART. VIII. — *The Adventures of Robin Day*, by the Author of "Calavar," "Nick of the Woods," &c. Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard. 12mo. 2 vols. pp. 249 and 267.

WE noticed Dr. Bird's romance of "Calavar" at the time of its appearance, at some length, and in terms of strong commendation.* Since then, we must needs take shame to ourselves for not having made our due contribution to his rising fame. He has been one of the most prolific of our writers, and we take him to be one of the most popular. "Calavar" has, we believe, gone to a third edition, while it has been followed by at least four other publications of equal size and pretension, previous to that which is now before us.

If we were to undertake to discuss the merits of "Robin Day" as a work of art, nobody probably would be more amused by our simplicity than the author. Its plot embraces love, delay, and trouble, misunderstanding, mystery, murder, and at last marriage; and so far it is a novel. But the writer seems to have set himself about it with no more definite plan, than that of getting his hero into a succession of serious and at the same time ridiculous scrapes, each a little worse than the last, and then getting him out of them with as little violation of probability as the limited machinery he has allowed himself admits. There is a competent pro-

* *North American Review*, Vol. XL. pp. 232, *et seq.*